

January 31, 2013

Testimony in favor of SB 387 for Raising and Indexing the Minimum Wage

Co-chairs and members of the committee,

My name is Asia Avery. I'm from Stafford Springs, CT, and I am submitting testimony in support of a raise in the minimum wage.

As a full time student at Asnuntuck Community College, to which I must commute, I am obligated to pay for car insurance, maintenance, and gas. To cover these expenditures, I work part-time as a kitchen assistant for which I earn the current minimum wage of \$8.25. I've been working this job for over 6 months and I do not anticipate a pay raise any time soon.

I am very aware of the essential role a college education frequently plays in improving one's chances of finding well-paying jobs. To obtain a college education, though, I must pay for tuition, insurance, and upkeep on my 17-year-old car. Additionally, I will likely need to replace my car sometime in the near future. Within the last six months, the cost of repairs on my car totaled over a thousand dollars, a bill that a minimum wage salary did not foot with ease.

Investing in my education is crucial to having access to a middle class quality of life. But in order to attend college, I need to make enough money to get there. Raising the minimum wage will enable me to earn enough to fund my education, invest in my future, finish school and become a productive member of Connecticut's workforce, giving back to our state's economy.

I've heard opponents of the raise in minimum wage argue that it will mostly benefit young people who do not need to support a family and whose only use for the pay raise will be as extra spending money. But for me and many other young people, our earnings go toward our education, transportation, helping with family bills, and various other necessities. We are working hard and trying to make the most of every opportunity presented to us. These responsibilities are part of our daily lives, and if we cannot meet them our futures and our families are impacted; we cannot progress if we cannot support our most basic needs. I ask you, therefore, to please support SB 387 to increase the minimum wage.

Thank You.